

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claims 1, 11 and 12.

The Examiner has requested a more descriptive title of the invention. The Examiner has requested the following title: Coin Counter and Ticket Dispenser for a Game Machine. Applicant has amended the title appropriately.

The Examiner has rejected claim 11 under 35 USC 112 as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission accounting to a gap between the elements. The omitted elements are how the number of coins determines that the ticket is generated. Claim 11 has been amended accordingly.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 as being anticipated by Castellano, 5,477,952.

Castellano relates to an electronic coin tracker for coin operated machines, particularly video games. The coin tracker monitors both (i) the deposit of coins and (ii) the activity of the coin operated machine (whether such activity is responsive to, or only to, the deposit of coins or not). The coin tracker reports the monitored (i) coin deposits and (ii) machine activity electronically preferably through an infrared light data link.

An electronic coin tracker device is used with an electrical coin operated machine having a coin receiving mechanism for producing a coin received electrical signal upon the receipt of the coin, and a machine controller for enabling a machine function in response to receipt of the coin received electrical signal. The coin tracker device includes a receiver that receives the coin received electrical signal from the coin

receiving mechanism; a coin counter that counts the number of times that the coin received electrical signal is received in order to maintain a current coin count representing the number of coins received into the coin receiving mechanism; and a transmitter that further communicates the coin received electrical signal, after each receipt thereof is counted by the coin counter means to the machine controller in order that the machine function is enabled. A read out is responsive to external interrogation for externally communicating the current coin count.

The coin tracker device sole function includes an electronic money counter that receives electrical signals normally produced within the apparatus upon the entrance of money into the apparatus so as to electrically maintain a record of money entered into the apparatus. The money counter includes an interrogatable and resetable first electronic counter that maintains a count of monies entered into the apparatus since a previous interrogation read out. This interrogatable first electronic counter resets to a zero count upon each and every occasion of its interrogation readout.

Because the money counter means is electronic, the count of its first electronic counter and the grand total count of its second electronic counter are not directly discernable by the human senses.

Accordingly, and because the readout produced by the electronic readout means are electronically detectable any unauthorized and abnormal manipulation of either or both the count of the first electronic counter, and the grand total count of the second electronic counter, should such even be possible as for purposes of fraud, will be completed because any attempted validation of such manipulation by the electronically-

detectable readouts requires such electronic means for receiving these readouts, and such knowledge for interpreting them, as may not be available to the party performing the unauthorized and abnormal manipulation.

The system also includes an electronic readout means for producing readouts of the total from the first electronic counter, and the grand total from the second electronic counter, of the electronic money counter. A transportable electronic sensor receives and stores the readouts, and further controllably outputs such stored readouts when directed to do so. A central computer serves to direct the transportable electronic sensor to output the stored readouts, and receiving the readouts so output, for displaying the readouts in a manner in which a human analyst may determine whether monies collected from the apparatus are in agreement with monies recorded as entered into the apparatus.

The information accumulated by the coin tracker is communicated to a hand held computer via an infrared link. This information is then transferred to a central office personal computer. The transferred data residing in the central office personal computer is in a standard import format compatible with commercially available data bases or spread sheet packages.

Figure 1 shows coin tracker 1 receives input signal called COIN INPUTS from up to four coin receiving mechanisms 21-24. A signal received from a Beltronics Ticket Dispenser 31 permits the coin tracker 1 to keep track of redemption tickets issued by the machine. The coin tracker data block is uploaded to the hand held in binary coded decimal format and is converted to ASCII comma delimited format within

the hand held. Redemption tickets are commonly redeemable at a central stand of the gaming arcade for small prizes, souvenirs, mementos of play.

Claim 1: The Examiner states that Castellano teaches a game machine (Col. 13, line 23). There is a counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the machine (Col. 6, lines 32-36). There is a means (the game machine's display) for showing the player when the ticket will be printed (i.e. when the player wins the game). There is a ticket dispenser (31).

Amended Claim 1 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano does not anticipate or make obvious amended claim 1 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Claim 3: The Examiner states that the dispensing unit is placed inside the game machine. (Col. 12, lines 22-38).

Claim 3 relates to the device of claim 1 wherein the dispensing unit is placed inside the gaming machine. Castellano does not anticipate or make obvious claim 3 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number

of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Claim 4: The Examiner states that the dispensing unit is an add-on to any existing gaming machine and gaming device. (Col. 16, lines 17-20).

Claim 4 relates to the device of claim 1 wherein the dispensing unit is an add-on to any existing gaming machine and gaming device. Castellano does not anticipate or make obvious claim 4 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Claim 6: The Examiner states that the dispensing unit is a self-contained unit that does not affect the play or outcome of the game.

Claim 6 relates to the device of claim 1 wherein the dispensing unit is a self-contained unit that does not affect the play or outcome of the gaming machine.

Castellano does not anticipate or make obvious claim 6 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Claim 8: The Examiner states that Figure 1 clearly shows four coin slots (21-24) that correspond to different denominations (i.e., nickel, dime, quarter, and dollar).

Castellano does not anticipate or make obvious claim 8 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to

generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

The Examiner has rejected claims 12-14, 17, and 18 as being anticipated by Quinn, 3,688,276.

Claim 12: The Examiner states that Quinn teaches a game machine (16). The player puts in coins (Col. 4, lines 38-40). The machine counts the coins and the number of counted coins is shown to the player (Col. 4, lines 47-50). The number of coins needed for a ticket to be generated is shown to the player (Col. 4, lines 40-41). A ticket is dispensed when the number of counted coins equals the number of coins needed (Col. 12, lines 6-12).

Quinn relates to a central computer which controls remote vending machines through long distance communication lines wherein the vending machine, in response to instructions from the computer, prints and issues valuable documents such as entertainment tickets, lottery tickets, race tickets and the like. The computer acts as a memory storage for keeping inventory and accounts. The invention provides a centralized computer controlling remote variable script vending machine over communications systems where the consumer can make a selection, the consumer will instruct the consumer whether its selection is available or another selection must be made. If available, the computer will instruct the consumer how much currency must be inserted into the vending machine. The computer will recognize the correct currency inserted, and if correct, the computer will instruct the vending machine to print out a ticket or other form of script. The system prints out active script.

To complete the transaction, the customer deposits in coin the amount of money necessary to make the purchase. The amount is shown automatically in window 44. In an embodiment, it is intended that the amount of purchase be made in coin.

Accordingly, the number of quarters necessary to complete the purchase is shown in window 46. As each quarter is placed in the coin deposit slot 48 and accepted by the machine, the counter visible through window 46 increases one unit until it reaches zero.

In the case of the lottery, the purchaser would select the desired number, the computer would scan its memory to determine whether or not this number has already been purchased, and indicate the result.

Amended claim 12 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn does not anticipate or make obvious claim 12.

Claim 13: The Examiner states that the counting of coins is accomplished by counting coin pulses off of the machine's hard meter and the ticket is dispensed based on the number of coins dispensed. (col. 2, lines 6-12).

Claim 13 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn does not anticipate or make obvious claim 13.

Claim 14: The Examiner states that the ticket is a lottery ticket (Abstract).

Claim 14 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn does not anticipate or make obvious claim 14.

Claim 17: The Examiner states that the number of counted coins is set to zero once a ticket is dispensed. (Col. 4, lines 47-50).

Claim 17 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn does not anticipate or make obvious claim 17.

Claim 18: The Examiner states that Quinn teaches using a remote unit to set the price of the ticket. (Col. 1, line 64-Col.2, line 16).

Claim 18 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn does not anticipate or make obvious claim 18.

The Examiner has rejected claim 2 as being obvious over Castellano as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Bittner, 5,290,033.

The Examiner states that Castellano teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Castellano does not teach mounting the device on the side of the game machine. Bittner teaches mounting an analogous device (202) on the side of the gaming machine. Castellano teaches that the device can be used as a retrofit to existing game machines. In cases where the device did not fit within the game cabinets, it would have been obvious to have attached the dispensing unit to the gaming machine as a side mounted box in order to retrofit a gaming machine that did not have room inside the gaming machine cabinet.

Bittner relates to a gaming machine and game coupons for allowing an operator to redeem winning game coupons by inserting them directly into the gaming machine rather than by taking them to a cashier. The game coupons are coded with a machine readable prize code which represents a number of prize game credits. The gaming machine includes a bill validator for accepting currency and winning game coupons from an operator. It also includes a code reader for reading the coupon prize codes as the coupons are inserted into the bill validator. The gaming machine issues game credits to the player depending on the prize codes of the submitted game coupons. Each winning coupon is coded with a unique coupon identification code. The code reader reads and records the coupon identification code of each winning coupon as it is submitted.

Claim 2 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed

in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus. The dispensing unit is a side mounted box attached to the gaming machine.

Castellano in view of Bittner does not make obvious claim 2 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses. Further, there is no teaching to combine the teachings of Castellano and Bittner, since Bittner uses the side mounted box for redeeming coupons which is not taught by Castellano.

The Examiner has rejected claims 5 and 9 as being obvious over Castellano as applied to claim 1; and further in view of Heidel, 5,342,047.

Regarding claim 5, the Examiner states that Castellano teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Castellano teaches that the device may be attached to virtually any gaming machine (Col. 16, lines 17-20). Castellano's invention is intended to detect and prevent fraud. (Abstract). Fraud is a significant problem in the gaming industry. Heidel teaches a game machine that can be used a number of different games. Heidel illustrates video poker (Fig. 1) and video keno (Fig 2b). Video bingo is a well-known equivalent. Video poker, keno, and bingo are all extremely well known in the art. They are extremely popular with many players and; along with reel-type machines, form the backbone of the electronic gaming industry. It would have been obvious to

have applied Castellano's coin tracker to video poker, keno, and bingo machines in order to detect and prevent fraud.

Heidel relates to a touch screen video gaming machine. In video lottery terminals that employ touch screens to permit a number of different games to be played on the same machine, the play of certain games can be improved by using electromechanical game buttons in conjunction with touch screen controls. Video gaming machines are currently finding application as video lottery terminals in state administered lotteries. As video lottery terminals these gaming machines essentially function in the same manner as video gaming machines found in state regulated casinos except that they generally use ticket printers to print tickets that can be exchanged for cash payments instead of paying winning amounts through a coin hopper as in conventional gaming machines. The video lottery terminal 10 also includes a coin acceptor 44, a bill acceptor 46 and a ticket printer 48.

Claim 5 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano in view of Heidel does not anticipate or make obvious claim 5 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number

of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Regarding claim 9, the Examiner states that Castellano teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Castellano teaches printing a ticket as a reward, but does not teach that the ticket is a lottery ticket. Heidel teaches dispensing a lottery ticket. (Col. 1, lines 10-18).

Claim 9 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano in view of Heidel does not anticipate or make obvious claim 9 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Further Castellano teaches redemption tickets which are commonly redeemable at a central stand of the gaming arcade for small prizes, souvenirs, mementos of play. There is nothing in Castellano which teaches the ticket to be a raffle, sweepstakes or lottery ticket. Further there is nothing in Castellano which teaches combining with Heidel.

The Examiner has rejected claims 7, 10 and 11 as being obvious over Castellano and further in view of Piechowiak, 6,012,982.

Regarding claim 7, the Examiner states that Castellano teaches the invention substantially disclosed. Fig. 3 shows the counter (12) counting pulses of the game machines hard meter (52). Castellano does not, however, teach awarding the player a bonus based on the number of coins played. Piechowiak teaches a game that awards a bonus based on a player reaching a certain coin threshold (Abstract). Bonuses are well known to the art and are commonly used to increase player interest. It would have been obvious to have awarded the player a bonus based on the number of coins played in order to increase interest in the game.

Piechowiak relates to a bonus award feature in linked gaming machines having a common feature controller. A system of linked gaming machines is disclosed where each of the linked gaming machines is connected to common controller. In a normal mode of play, each of the linked gaming machines operates like a conventional machine where the generation of certain combinations of symbols provide awards to the individual players whose machines generate such combinations. In addition to this normal mode of play, a bonus feature is added where the generation of combinations of bonus symbols is used by a central controller to build up a pooled bonus value based upon the values of the combinations of bonus symbols generated by all the linked gaming machines. When a player hits a combination which causes the accumulated bonus value to meet or exceed a predetermined value, a bonus award is given to the player which caused the threshold to be exceeded. To discourage players from not

playing any of the linked gaming machines until the accumulated bonus value is near the threshold, each machine has an independent hit counter which is incremented based on the number of occurrences of bonus combinations generated by that machine. The player may use the value in his/her individual hit counter in order to exceed the award threshold for the bonus award.

Instead of the feature controller 110 determining a win based on the polled game results and communicating the award amount to the gaming machine, feature controller 110 could modify the award table in each of the gaming machines 101-108, via communication lines 111-118, to reflect the enable feature. The gaming machine would then compare its game result to the award table and then provide a corresponding award. In this embodiment, feature controller 110 would still poll the various gaming machines to determine whether the feature should be enabled or disabled in the various award tables.

Claim 7 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano in view of Piechowiak does not anticipate or make obvious claim 7 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number

of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses.

Further claim 7 requires that the bonus be paid on a single gaming machine. Piechowiak requires that the bonus be paid on linked gaming machines. Further there is nothing in Castellano which would combine a bonusing system for the number of coins played.

Regarding claim 10, the Examiner states that Piechowiak linking games so that a combination of devices must have a certain number of coins inserted before a bonus (ticket) is dispensed. (Abstract).

Claim 10 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano in view of Piechowiak does not anticipate or make obvious claim 10 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses. Further there is nothing in Castellano which would teach linking games, since each device is individually controlled.

Regarding claim 11, the Examiner states that Piechowiak teaches that there is a remote unit (122) for changing the number of coins necessary to generate the ticket.

Claim 11 requires that the device have a dispensing unit which comprises a numeric counter for counting the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit visually displays the number of coins a player has placed in the gaming machine. The dispensing unit further comprises a means for visually showing a player the number of coins necessary to generate a ticket. The dispensing unit further comprises a ticket dispensing apparatus.

Castellano in view of Piechowiak does not anticipate or make obvious claim 11 because it does not teach visually displaying the number of coins played or the number of coins needed to generate a ticket. Castellano uses an electronic counter which is not directly discernable by the human senses. Further there is nothing in Castellano which would teach a remote unit for changing the number of coins necessary to generate the ticket linking games.

The Examiner has rejected claims 15 and 16 as being obvious over Quinn as applied to claim 12 or 14 in view of the Big Game Lottery.

Regarding claims 15 and 16, the Examiner states that Quinn teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Quinn teaches dispensing lottery tickets, but does not go into the mechanics of how lotteries operate. Lotteries operate using well-known principles. The Big Game is merely one of a myriad of examples of lotteries. The winner of lotteries is determined by holding a drawing, i.e., by lot. The size of the lottery jackpot is based on the number of tickets sold. The bonus prize is based on a percentage of total coins placed into all participating gaming machines. It would have been obvious to have chosen the winner of the lottery by random drawing and to have

based the jackpot on a percentage of total coins placed into the gaming machines in order to follow standard practice for running a lottery.

Big Game Lottery article relates to frequently asked questions for Big Game Mega Millions.

Claims 15 and 16 requires that the player play a gaming machine comprising a slot machine or gaming device. Quinn teaches a device where a user puts coins into a machine and receives a lottery ticket. The player does not play a slot machine or gaming device in Quinn. Therefore Quinn in view of the Big Game Lottery does not anticipate or make obvious claims 15 and 16.

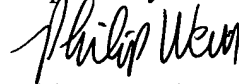
Applicant encloses herewith a clean copy of the amended specification pages.

Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance.

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